**Reflection #2**

*How important is the literature review (and differentiating between various types of journals) and assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies?*

The value in differentiating between various types of journals when beginning the research process lies in the differentiating of information which results from such an activity. The various types of journals available will offer varying levels of quality in the articles and information presented. The qualitative difference lies in the amount and type of scrutiny given to an article before publication. A trade journal will therefore offer one level of review before publication while a blind refereed/peer reviewed journal will offer another level of scrutiny entirely. The academic level of review in the blind refereed/peer reviewed journal provides an assurance that the information contained within will be of the more scholarly variety.

The value in reviewing literature, assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies lies in the ability to build on rather than repeat prior research efforts. Through reviewing literature and prior research one gains a deeper understanding of the topic at hand, speaking both generally and specifically in terms of prior research and what has worked or not worked already within that topic. Through assessing theorists in the field, one gains insight into the various educational philosophies which have shaped the field of research. One is also given the chance during this process to assess his/her own educational philosophy and evaluate how that impacts one’s own research direction. An assessment of current instructional strategies provides one with insight into the field or topic as it currently exists. This allows one to either build on or avoid entirely a strategy already in practice. All of the above steps (literature review, differentiating between various types of journals, assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies) go towards shaping a researchers perspective and approach when embarking on a course of research.